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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/074,818	02/13/2002	John Beal	PCC2	7092

7590

04/09/2004

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EXAMINER

GIBSON, RANDY W

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2841

DATE MAILED: 04/09/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/074,818

Applicant(s)

BEAL ET AL.

Examiner

Randy W. Gibson

Art Unit

2841

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Feb. 27, 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 7-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 7-9 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10, 12, and 21-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11, 13-15 and 26 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 13 February 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed Feb. 27, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive with respect to some of the claims. Applicant stated that "[n]either Sagastegui nor Maguire teach or suggest such a sealing device that serves to both seal off the hopper during removal of the hopper and to regulate material flow from the hopper when the hopper is positioned to dispense material"; however, applicant did not address the examiner's remark in the last rejection that the sealing shoe of Maguire inherently regulates the flow of material from the hopper by sealing off the hopper bottom. It is a binary form of regulation -- the material flows when the hopper is in place and the shoe is in the open position, and the material does not flow when the hopper is removed and the shoe is closed. Claim 1 does contain the positive recitation that "the sealing device [serves] also to regulate material flow from the hopper *when the hopper is positioned to dispense material* [emphases added]", but this limitation is not clearly set out set out in independent claims 10, 21, 22, or 24 for example.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. The newly cited reference to Maguire (US # 6,111,206) does teach using a sliding gate to both seal off a hopper and to regulate the flow rate of material from the hopper (via a metering cylinder), but the hopper in this reference is not disclosed as removable and the examiner concedes that it is unclear how the teaching of the reciprocating gate of this reference to Maguire could be combined with the sliding shoe

disclosed in the other reference to Maguire (US # 6,057,514), which is solely used to seal off the removable hopper, especially in light of the fact that the removable hopper is disclosed as having a separate metering device. Therefore, independent claims 1, 5, 16 and their dependent claims are allowable. For the same reasons, claims 11 and 26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The specific hopper structure recited in independent claims 7 and 8 are not suggested by the prior art.

Claims 13-15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The specific hopper structure recited in these claims are not suggested by the prior art.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
4. Claims 10, 12, and 21-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Maguire (US # 6,057,514).

Conclusion

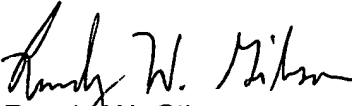
5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Randy W. Gibson whose telephone number is (571) 271-2103. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri., 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David S Martin can be reached on (571) 272-2107. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Randy W. Gibson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2841